

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-9 are amended. Claim 1 is amended to refer to an articulation connection that couples the discharge section to the crusher assembly. The articulation connection provide pivoting movement of the discharge section relative to the crusher assembly in a lateral direction (side to side movement) and in a transverse direction (upward or downward) between the discharge section and the remainder of the assembly. Support for the above amendment can be found in the specification as filed, page 2 seventh full paragraph; page 4, seventh full paragraph; page 6, first full paragraph and original claims 3 and 4. Claim 2 is amended to depend from claim 1. Claims 3 and 4 are amended to conform to terminology with each other and to claim 1. Claims 3-9 are amended to begin with the word “The” instead of the word “A”. Applicants submit the foregoing amendments do not add new matter.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 1 and 3-9 under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner (U.S. Patent No. 5,647,545). Claim 2 was rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner in view of Guggenheimer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,763,845). Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention would not have been obvious from Conner or the combination of Conner and Guggenheimer et al.

Conner discloses a crushing plant 10 in which a feed conveyor 42 is detachably mounted to a crusher 14. A discharge conveyor 46 is also detachably mounted to the crusher. Conner does not disclose the feed conveyor 42 being detachable from the discharge conveyor 46. These conveyors are simply collapsible relative to one another as illustrated in figure 3 for transport purposes. The crushing plant 10 does not comprise one or more articulation connections between the discharge conveyor 46 and the feed conveyor 42.

Moreover, Conner does not disclose an articulation connection configured to allow pivoting in a lateral direction and a transverse direction such that the assembled plant unit can be both steered and configured to follow undulations in the surface of the ground as it is moved as a unitary assembly.

As detailed in the specification as filed, the present invention provides a crusher assembly that is both conveniently transported between site operations and easily maneuvered on site.

This is achieved by providing a modular 3-part crusher assembly in which individual components are detachably connected together to allow easy transportation. The modular units may then be assembled on site and are coupled via an articulation such that the coupled modular units may be conveniently maneuvered at the site.

In particular, the articulation connection, forming part of the crusher assembly, provides pivoting movement in at least two planes aligned transverse to one another. This allows the units of the assembly to pivot laterally during steering movement and to pivot upward and downward relative to one another to follow the undulations in the surface of the ground over which the assembly is travelling. A very versatile and maneuverable assembly is therefore provided.

The crushing plant of Conner comprises a first independently moveable crushing plant 10 and a second screening plant 32. Both the units 10, 32 may be operationally coupled as detailed at column 4, line 17 to 29. Conner does not disclose a *physical couple* between the two units. Accordingly, the assembly 10, 32 is not configured to be maneuvered on site as a single unit. In contrast the respective units 10 and 32 must be maneuvered independently and reassembled according to the procedure of column 4, lines 17 to 29.

EP 0327678 (Guggenheimer) discloses a processing machine comprising a mobile crusher 1 connected to a sieving station 2, the two units being physically coupled via a carriage 7. The assembly may comprise a third processing and discharge unit 3. The modular units when coupled are controlled by a common control 21.

Guggenheimer does not disclose an articulation connection configured to allow pivoting movement in at least two planes to allow steering and to account for undulations in the ground surface.

The skilled person would find no motivation to implement an articulation connection according to the subject invention from either Conner or Guggenheimer. Moreover, the skilled person would not be minded to combine the two documents given that the crushing plant of Conner is not configured to be maneuvered in a coupled configuration. The present invention is advantageous over the cited prior art and the skilled person is not prompted towards the present invention by any one of the prior art documents. In particular, the skilled person would have to overcome the many practical obstacles in modifying the respective crushing plants to incorporate

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an articulation connection that may be conveniently coupled and decoupled whilst providing a reliably coupled and very maneuverable composite unit.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims would not have been obvious from the disclosure of Conner individually (claims 1 and 3-9) or in combination with Guggenheimer (claim 2). Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under Section 103(a). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0843.
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